



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

| APPLICATION NO. | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
|--|---------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| 10/530,011 | 06/28/2005 | James Walker Selway | 267-93 | 7869 |
| 23117 | 7590 | 02/25/2008 | EXAMINER | |
| NIXON & VANDERHYE, PC 901 NORTH GLEBE ROAD, 11TH FLOOR ARLINGTON, VA 22203 | | | JARRETT, RYAN A | |
| ART UNIT | PAPER NUMBER | | | |
| | 2121 | | | |
| MAIL DATE | DELIVERY MODE | | | |
| 02/25/2008 | PAPER | | | |

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

| | | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|--|
| Notice of Allowability | Application No. | Applicant(s) | |
| | 10/530,011 | SELWAY, JAMES WALKER | |
| | Examiner | Art Unit | |
| | Ryan A. Jarrett | 2121 | |

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTO-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. This communication is responsive to amendment filed 12/26/07.
2. The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-6, 8-21 and 23-27.
3. Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All
 - b) Some*
 - c) None
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) hereto or 2) to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.

Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____.
4. Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material
5. Notice of Informal Patent Application
6. Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____.
7. Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. Other _____.

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

The application has been amended as follows:

In claim 27 line 16, "in" was inserted after --sub-process--.

The title was changed to:

"SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR CONTROLLING A DESIGN PROCESS BY
SPECIFYING ACTIVE VARIABLES AND PASSIVE VARIABLES"

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 12/26/07 has been entered.

Drawings

The drawings were received on 12/26/07. These drawings are acceptable.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 1-6, 8-21, and 23-27 are allowed.

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

The prior art of record fails to teach or fairly suggest specifying which of the one or more variable (A,B) are active variables, each of which can have its domain modified by at least one process within the sub-process to which the each active variable belongs, and which of the one or more variables (A,B) are passive variables, each of which has its domain determined within allowable values by domains of the other variable or variables in the relationship but not by any process within the sub-process to which the each passive variable belongs, as recited in each of independent claims 1,

17, and 27, in combination with the remaining features and elements of the claimed invention.

The claims are statutory as they are directed to a practical application of controlling a manufacturing design process. Furthermore, claims 1 and 27 recite certain hardware elements and thus cannot be considered mere software *per se*. The computer-readable medium of claim 27 is interpreted to be a tangible storage device, such as a memory. Support for the "processor" of claim 17 and the "computer-readable medium" of claim 27 is considered to be found at least in the disclosed "server" at pg. 7 lines 6-10 of the specification.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ryan A. Jarrett whose telephone number is (571) 272-3742. The examiner can normally be reached on 10:00-6:30 M-F.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Ryan A. Jarrett/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 2121

02/18/08